

Wycombe Goal Famine Ended—By Bates!

By "NOVA"

Wycombe Wanderers 3; Bromley 1

AT last the Wycombe forwards have managed to score—and it had to be Paul Bates who set the example, with a glorious goal from 20 yards midway through the first half of their Isthmian League game with Bromley on Saturday.

Wycombe richly deserved this fine victory over last year's League champions. They were both cool and competent in defence, and fast and dangerous in attack.

Bates who received a great ovation in his first senior game of the season for the Wanderers on his return from Tooting, put in some power shots which the other forwards were soon striving to emulate.

Steve Hyde had probably his best game this season and was unlucky when two terrific shots hit the posts. He chased and challenged persistently when beaten—an example which was again followed by his team-mates.

George Blair, too, was right back to form, working tirelessly and often brilliantly. But Len Worley was rather disappointing and only rarely got the better of the experienced full-back Norman.

Peter James, a late substitute for the injured Tommy Holmes, again obviously lacked confidence and seemed disinclined to do anything but the very ordinary. Wycombe need a forward of his calibre—a hard worker with a powerful shot—but until the crowd give him a chance to settle down he is unlikely to reproduce his best.

Dave Thomas, back after his injury, showed all his old touches. He was brilliant in both defence and attack, and was, for my money—the man of the match.

John Fisher produced some delightful touches, while hard-working Charlie Gale completed a fine half-back line.

John Beck, too, was in superlative form, making brilliant interceptions and tackles. Alistair Lewis recaptured his early season form. He must surely be the most constructive full-back in the League.

Ken Brown was immaculate as ever and could be in no way blamed for Bromley's goal.

BROMLEY WORRIED

From the start, when Steve Hyde hit a tremendous shot into the hands of the Bromley goalkeeper, Wycombe obviously meant business. Blair, constantly switching the direction of attack, soon had the tough Bromley defenders worried. Joyce, a fine pivot, kept Wycombe out for 27 minutes but he was unable to stop Bates scoring with a pile-driver. Blair drew Joyce and then pushed the ball across the face of the goal for Bates to score.

A few minutes later Wycombe had a lucky escape when Beck brought down inside-left Nottage inside the penalty area. Right-winger Hall took the spot-kick—and blasted it well wide of the post.

After half-time Wycombe attacked strongly and shots from Blair, Bates and Hyde were all well saved by Price, and it came as rather a surprise when Bromley equalised.

Inside-left Nottage received a pass on the corner of the Wycombe area and put in a fine cross shot which beat Brown.

Determined not to lose the initiative, Wycombe soon hit back and Bates missed a "sitter" from five yards and James struck a post before they managed to pull ahead again.

This time it was Beck who went through, in true Jimmy Armfield fashion. Just inside the penalty area he was hauled down. Beck himself took the penalty and converted his third of the season.

Then came Hyde's two shots which hit the posts and just before the final whistle Blair scored a great goal with a glorious header from a left-wing Worley centre.